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U.S. Centennial Commission

# THE CENTENNIAL.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1876.

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*Special Message from the President to both Houses of Congress,  
transmitting Reports from the United States  
Centennial Commission.*

THE PRESIDENT RECOMMENDS THE EXHIBITION, AND URGES  
PROMPT ACTION BY CONGRESS.

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*To the Senate and House of Representatives :*

I have the honor herewith to submit the report of the Centennial Commissioners, and to add a word in the way of recommendation.

There have now been International Expositions held by three of the great powers of Europe. It seems fitting that the one hundredth Anniversary of our Independence should be marked by an event that will display to the world the growth and progress of a nation devoted to freedom and to the pursuit of fame, fortune and honors by the lowest citizen as well as the highest.

A failure in this enterprise would be deplorable. Success can be assured by arousing public opinion to the importance of the occasion.

To secure this end, in my judgment, Congressional legislation is necessary, to make the Exposition both national and international.

The benefits to be derived from a successful International Exposition are manifold. It will necessarily be accompanied by expenses beyond the receipts from the Exposition itself, but they will be compensated for many fold by the commingling of people from all sections of our own country, by bringing together the people of different na-



tionalities; by bringing into juxtaposition, for ready examination, our own and foreign skill and progress in manufactures, agriculture, art, science, and civilization.

The selection of the site for the Exposition seems to me appropriate, from the fact that one hundred years before the date fixed for the Exposition the Declaration of Independence, which launched us into the galaxy of nations as an independent people, emanated from the same spot.

We have much in our varied climate, soil, mineral products and skill, of which advantage can be taken by other nationalities to their profit. In return, they will bring to our shores works of their skill, and familiarize our people with them, to the mutual advantage of all parties.

Let us have a complete success in our Centennial Exposition, or suppress it in its infancy, acknowledging an inability to give it the international character to which our self-esteem aspires.

(Signed)

U. S. GRANT.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, *February* 25, 1874.



# THE CENTENNIAL:

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1876 AND NATIONAL  
CELEBRATION OF THE

## CENTENARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE;

*Reports from the United States Centennial Commission transmitted to Congress by the President.*

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OFFICE OF UNITED STATES CENTENNIAL COMMISSION,  
PHILADELPHIA, *Feb. 23, 1874.*

*To the President:*

Section 13 of the act approved June 4, 1872, provides "That it shall be the duty of the United States Centennial Commission to make report, from time to time, to the President of the United States, of the progress of the work entrusted to it."

In obedience to that requirement, and referring to previous communications made by the Commission to the President and to Congress, under the respective dates of the 23d of November, 1872, and the 21st of February, 1873, the undersigned, President of the United States Centennial Commission, has the honor to report on behalf of the Commission, as follows:

Since the date of the report submitted to Congress in February, 1873, a fourth session of the Commission has been held in Philadelphia, which commenced May 7, and ended May 13, 1873. A copy of the Journal of Proceedings of that session, including the report of the Executive Committee, is annexed, (Appendix B.)

In order to secure an efficient and prompt administration of the executive business of the Commission at Philadelphia, several amendments were made to the By-laws, among which was the introduction of an article (VI) authorizing the Executive Committee to elect one of its own members to be Director-General. By virtue of that



authority, Mr. A. T. Goshorn, a member of the Commission from Ohio, was, on the 12th of May, 1873, unanimously elected to that office. He was invested with full executive control of the affairs of the Commission, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

Mr. Goshorn entered upon his duties on the 14th of October last, after having visited the International Exhibition at Vienna, which he carefully examined, with a view to avail himself of such light as might be derived therefrom in the direction of the affairs entrusted to him. In concert with the Executive Committee, he has organized the office of the Commission, and prepared regulations for the formation of the Exhibition.

Much valuable information was obtained concerning the Vienna Exhibition by the agents employed by the Commission for the purpose; and with the data in relation to preceding international exhibitions, collected from official reports, it has been of great assistance in developing the arrangement of plans and organization for that of 1876. The reports of those agents, Messrs. William P. Blake and Henry Pettit, will be found in the appendices transmitted herewith.

With the report made by the Commission to Congress in February, 1873, (House Mis. Doc. No. 89, 43d Congress, 3d Sess., pp. 157 to 167,) were extracts from the official accounts of receipts and expenses of the French Commission of the Paris Exposition of 1867.

Those accounts, together with those of other recent exhibitions, illustrate a most important and significant principle, which experience in universal expositions has more and more fully developed and established with each succeeding one:—that the benefits of such exhibitions to the country giving them, and to the cause of general progress, are such as to justify and require an appropriation on the part of the government which is responsible to other powers for the success of such an undertaking, and it is impossible to imagine how a power within whose boundaries such a concourse of industries and people takes place can evade the responsibility.

This national undertaking has now reached that phase at which, in an international sense, it is to be decided whether the United States, as a republican nation, will fulfil that responsibility. They have already, so far as relates to foreign governments, assumed it, and the Com-



mission, acting as the agent of the States, does not know how to retrace the steps which have been taken, without discredit and injury to the national reputation. They have already pledged themselves to compete with other governments in promoting, through international exhibitions, the cause of human advancement in the arts and industries that are the foundation of the wealth and prosperity of all nations.

In the case of the Paris Exposition of 1867, the National Government of France and the city of Paris provided about three-fifths of the capital for the purposes of the exhibition, and the balance was made up by private subscriptions.

The financial basis of the Austrian International Exhibition of 1873 was as follows :

1st. The sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars was subscribed chiefly by the Trades Unions of Vienna.

2d. The Imperial Government unreservedly appropriated four and a half millions of dollars, and added to this a loan, without interest, of one and a half million, making six million derived from the Government for the purpose of the exhibition.

From the facts thus presented, it appears that European Governments exhibit their practical sympathy in the cause of labor and science, by a recognition of their just claims upon the public treasury, for a sufficient amount of pecuniary aid to insure the success of these temporary exhibitions.

It is respectfully submitted that the Government of the United States, if true to its principles and its traditional devotion to the interests and elevation of labor, and the promotion of universal progress, will certainly not refuse to follow those precedents established by European governments.

Past international exhibitions have been, to some extent, experimental, but the common judgment of civilized nations proclaims their success in advancing every branch of industry, science, and national development ; in diffusing throughout the world the most advanced ideas ; knowledge of the latest improvements in manufactures and mechanical inventions ; in methods and processes as well as



in products, and also in promoting social and commercial intercourse between the people of the various countries.

European Governments perceiving the benefits specially accruing to the nations in which such exhibitions are held, have emulated each other in their efforts to secure the privilege of holding them.\*

The reports received through several channels, concerning the action of foreign governments in regard to the President's recommendation to them of the Exhibition, are such as to encourage the belief that, if the President had been authorized to give a more direct and explicit invitation, the acceptances would have been more general and prompt.

The Secretary of State has informed the Commission that the governments of the following countries have officially communicated their decision to participate in the Exhibition, viz: the German Empire, the Netherlands, Belgium, Mexico, Ecuador, and Hayti. The Secretary of State has made known the gratifying fact that Prince Bismarck, the Chancellor of that Empire, in communicating printed copies of the communications of this government on the subject to the German Parliament, recommended a participation in the Exhibition and provision for the appointment of a commission for each State of the Empire, as well as a Plenipotentiary to reside at Philadelphia until the close of the Exhibition. The Republic of Ecuador has not only accepted, but has already appointed a Commissioner Resident, who has presented his credentials at Philadelphia. A dispatch received from the Honorable George P. Marsh, through the Department of State, gives reason for the belief that the Kingdom of Italy will add to the attractions of the Exhibition by a display of specimens of the treasures of art and manufactures for which that kingdom is so justly celebrated.

From dispatches received from the Minister of the United States at Vienna, the confident belief is entertained that the Austro-Hungarian Empire will be conspicuously represented in our Exhibition by the extent, variety and excellence of her products.

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\*While the Vienna Exhibition was open, it was reported in the German Press that a German Committee was preparing for an international exhibition in the German Empire, to have taken place about 1868, but for the announcement of our own, which, besides the official notice to Governments, was made known to the exhibitors and Visitors at Vienna, by the distribution of copies of the President's Proclamation and official papers, printed in the four principal languages of Europe.

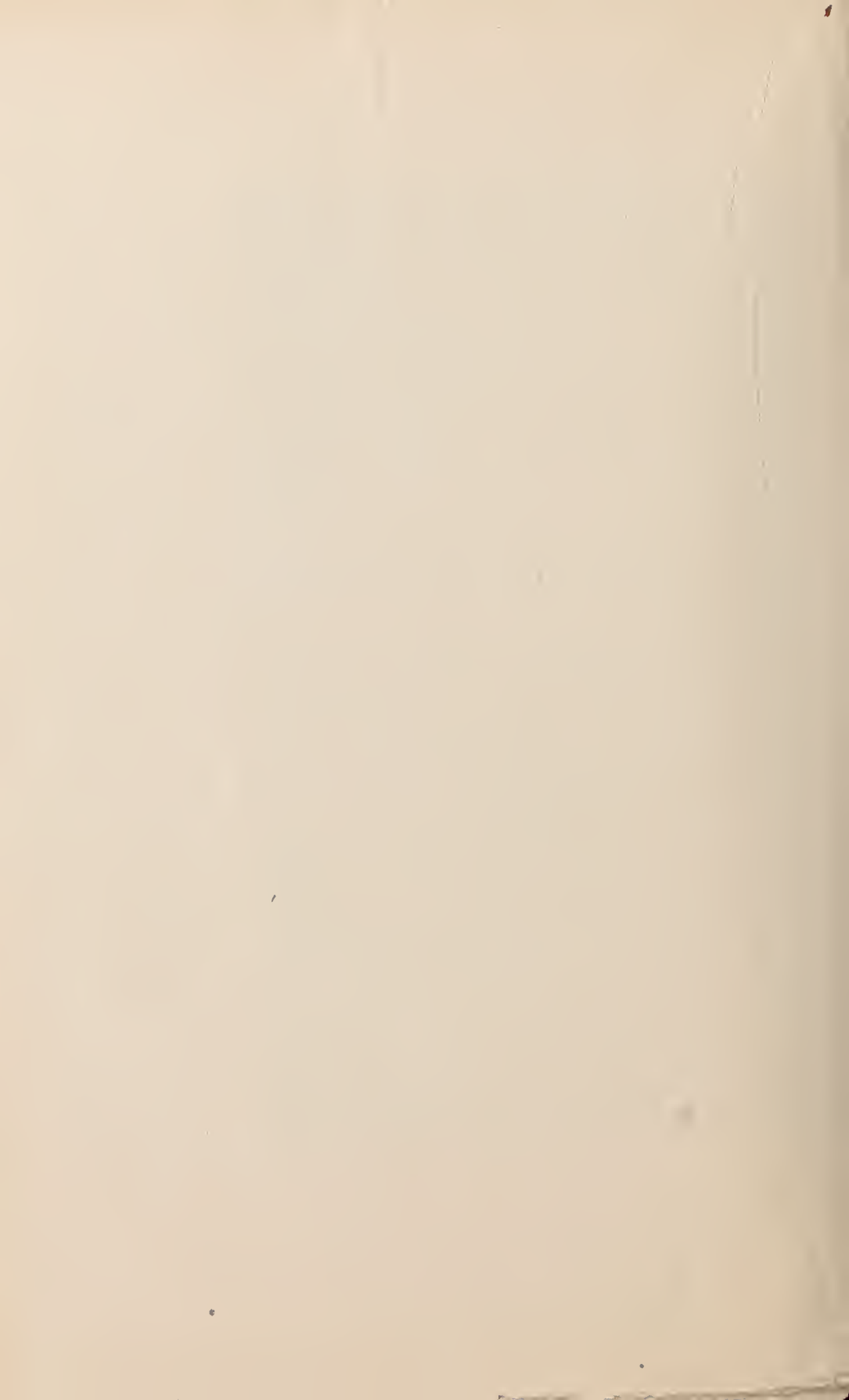


It should be remembered that the proposed Exhibition is, by the act of Congress authorizing it, invested with the character of a National Celebration of the centenary of American Independence, and by the same authority has been so proclaimed and so commended to foreign nations by the President of the United States, and that the maximum amount of capital to be raised was fixed at ten millions of dollars. It should be considered, too, that the cost of labor and of material is greater in the United States than in Europe. It is submitted, therefore, that the amount to be appropriated by Congress should be proportioned with reference to these facts, and with reference also to the degree of aid which experience has shown to be requisite from the Governments under whose auspices the latest and most extensive of such exhibitions have been held.

It is the desire of the Commission that whatever appropriation is made should be guarded by such wise provisions and administered under such governmental control as will insure its judicious expenditure for the purposes intended.

The recent almost unprecedented depression in manufactures, trade and finance has interfered with the progress of subscriptions to the stock of the Centennial Board of Finance and with the payment of installments due on those already made. This state of affairs affords another imperative reason for such action by Congress as will provide sufficient and timely appropriations to guarantee the success of the national undertaking.

Pennsylvania stands pledged by an act of her Legislature for one million dollars, and the City of Philadelphia for a half million, to be expended upon a building to be used by the Commission as a Gallery of Fine Art, which building will be a very imposing and beautiful addition to the groupe, and will remain as a perpetual memorial of the occasion. A copy of the plans of this building is annexed hereto (Appendix A, enclosure 1.) The people of Pennsylvania, in addition to these State and municipal appropriations, have subscribed to the stock of the Centennial Board of Finance about one and a half million of dollars, which will go into the general fund for the expenses of the work of the Commission as it progresses. This provision for about three times the quota apportioned to the State may be regarded as fully counter-



balancing any peculiar advantage to the State growing out of the location of the Exhibition, and is as much as could be justly claimed from her, in view of the national character of the celebration of which the Exhibition is the chief demonstrative element.

Notwithstanding that opportunities have been given in all the States and Territories by general advertisement, the agency of National Banks, and in other ways, the amount of actual subscriptions to date from such States and Territories indicates that from this source the means could not be secured in time for use in prosecuting the work, if at all.

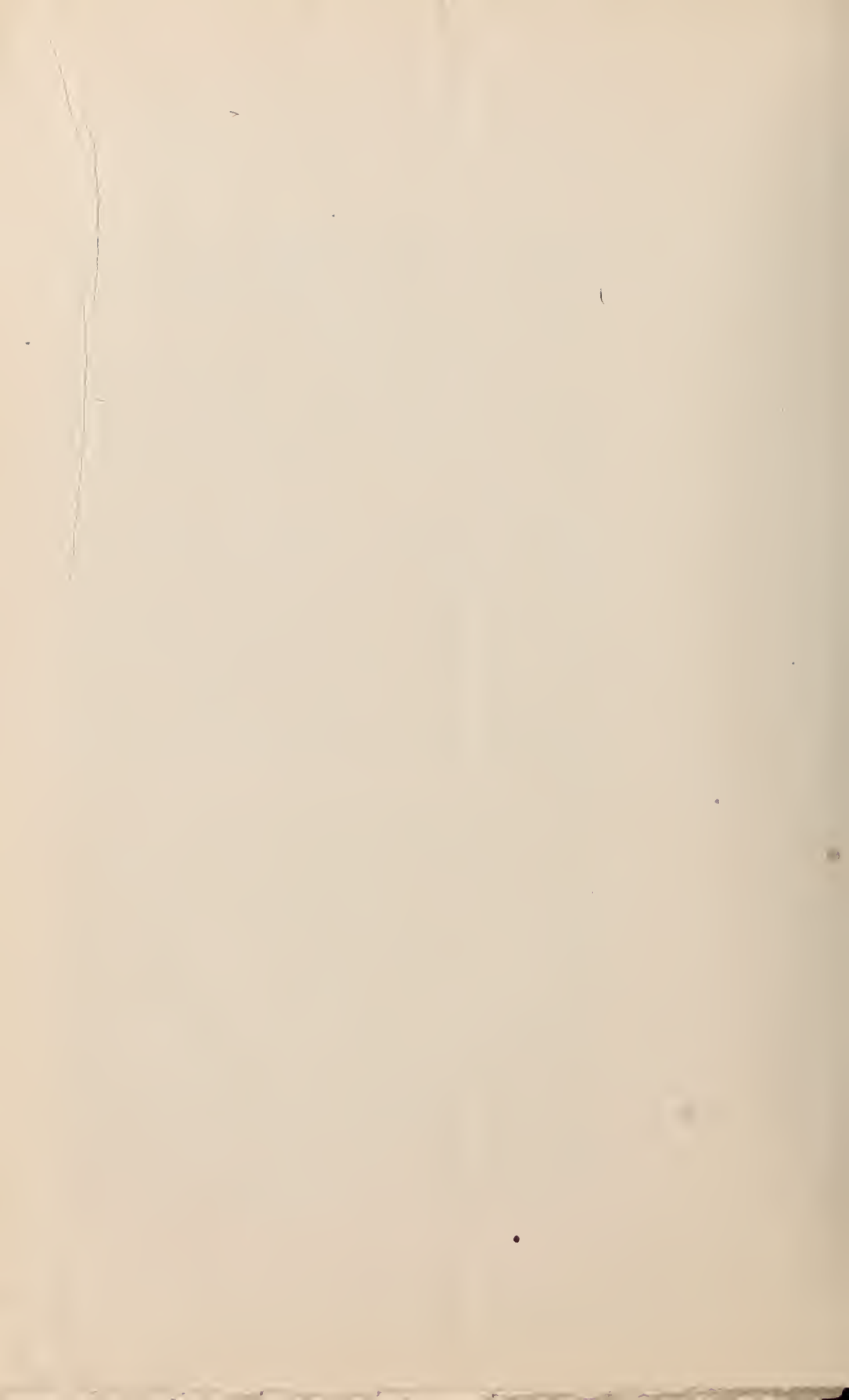
The commission has information that preparations are in progress throughout the country to make the most creditable exhibits of the products and industries of the nation, and that this feature of the exhibition is assured beyond any doubt; but as the enterprise is regarded as a national one, there is an unwillingness to contribute money for the preparation and installation of the exhibition, which it is regarded as specially incumbent on the national Government to provide for. While many of the States of the Union are not in a financial condition to contribute money for this purpose, the citizens thereof express the warmest sympathy in the success of the enterprise, and will give it their cordial support so far as it is in their power.

Steps have been taken to secure a proper representation of the products of every State and Territory.

Among the various interests seeking a representation in the Exhibition, those relating to mines and mining will be greatly benefited, and this will promote largely the prosperity and development of the States and Territories in which the mines represented may be located. A large quantity of valuable specimens has even now been collected in some of the Western Territories, and they are ready for shipment. Such arrangements will be made as will result in displaying to the world a perfect representation of the wonderful resources of the country in the precious metals, and in coal, iron, steel, copper, lead, and other minerals.

Associations and individuals representing these various interests have offered their co-operation, and are perfecting plans for securing an exhibition of all the industries pertaining to them.

The agricultural resources and industries, and the im



plements which are used in those industries, will form a prominent and attractive feature of the occasion; and the exhibition of horses, cattle, and other domestic animals will be most extensive and thorough.

The Department of Agriculture, State Boards of Agriculture, and nearly all the societies and associations representing agriculture and horticulture in all their branches, have signified their deep interest in the subject, and offered their aid and co-operation.

The Executive Departments of the General Government also have manifested a similar interest and disposition, and the Executive order providing for their representation in the Exhibition meets with general approval.

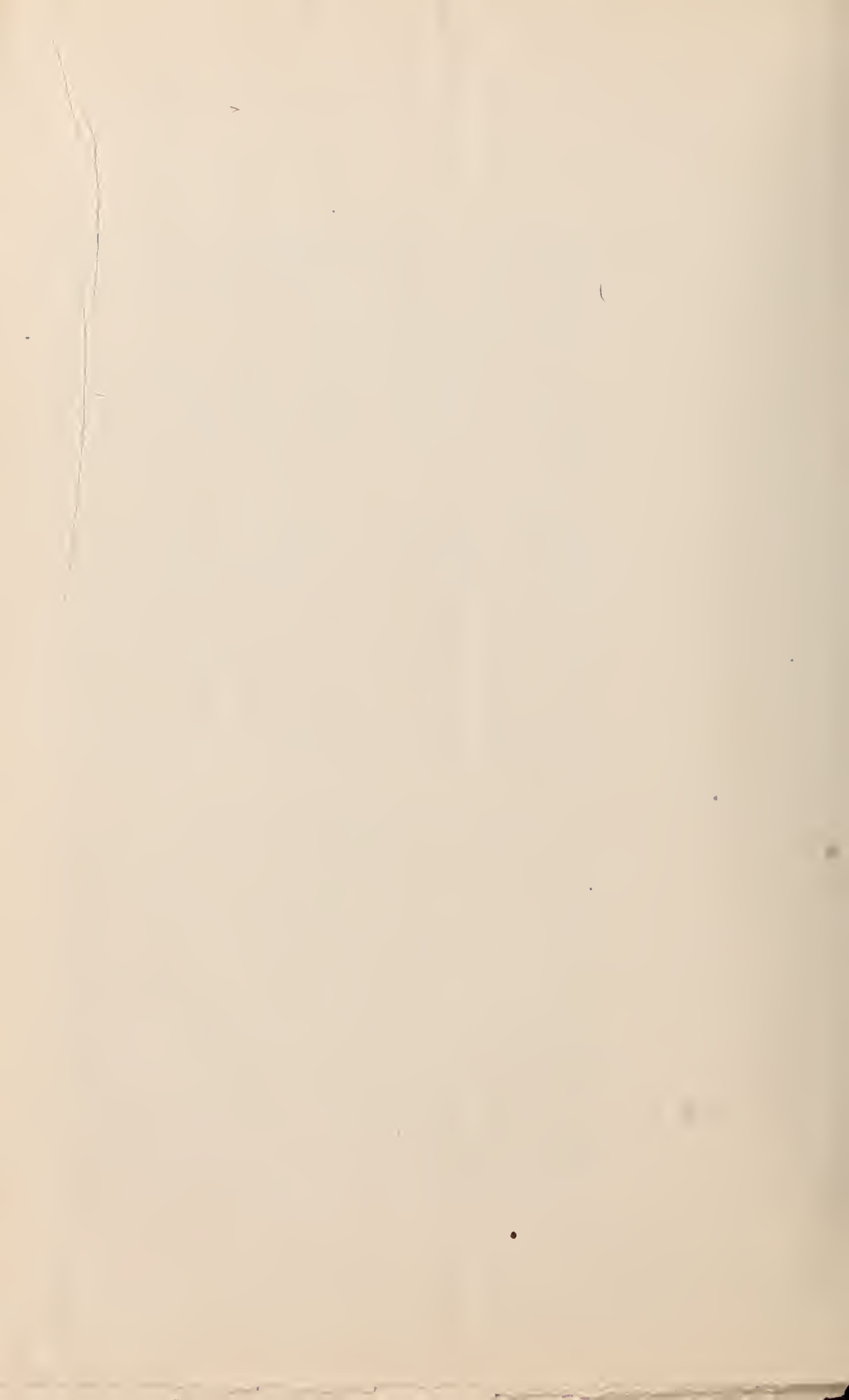
The exhibition of fishery products and of the apparatus for capturing and preserving fish will be an interesting, instructive, and valuable feature of the display. It will embrace a general collection, representing the fisheries of the world and all the apparatus and science of fish culture. Gentlemen learned in this study are deeply interested in preparing for the Exposition.

The National Academy of Fine Arts, of New York, and other art associations, offered their co-operation with the Commission in any organized effort to make the Fine Art Department of the Exhibition worthy of the occasion in its representation of American and foreign art in all branches.

Information from Europe shows that a deep interest is taken in the exhibition by our own artists who are sojourning at the great art centres, and that they are preparing for an honorable competition.

Associations or societies of all kinds throughout the country have manifested their sympathy with the Commission, and their desire to be instrumental in promoting its work on behalf of the nation.

The benefits the American people will derive from the exhibition are by no means confined to the exhibition of American resources and products of art and industry. The arts of design will be represented in a manner never before possible on this continent. The products of the mechanic arts and manufactures of Europe and the Eastern nations will undoubtedly be represented on a grand and comprehensive scale, and not alone the products, but descriptions or illustrations of the methods and processes of their production will be given. Thus



will be afforded to the millions of mechanics and artists, and to the pupils of technical and industrial schools who may be unable to visit foreign countries an opportunity to examine and study all that is most valuable and instructive in foreign arts and industries. Europe will come to them with its machinery and wares so arranged and classified, that they can view them as a whole, or study them in detail, and utilize their teachings.

The scope of the exhibition is broad and comprehensive. All the products of industry, art, science, and modern civilization, are covered by its classification.

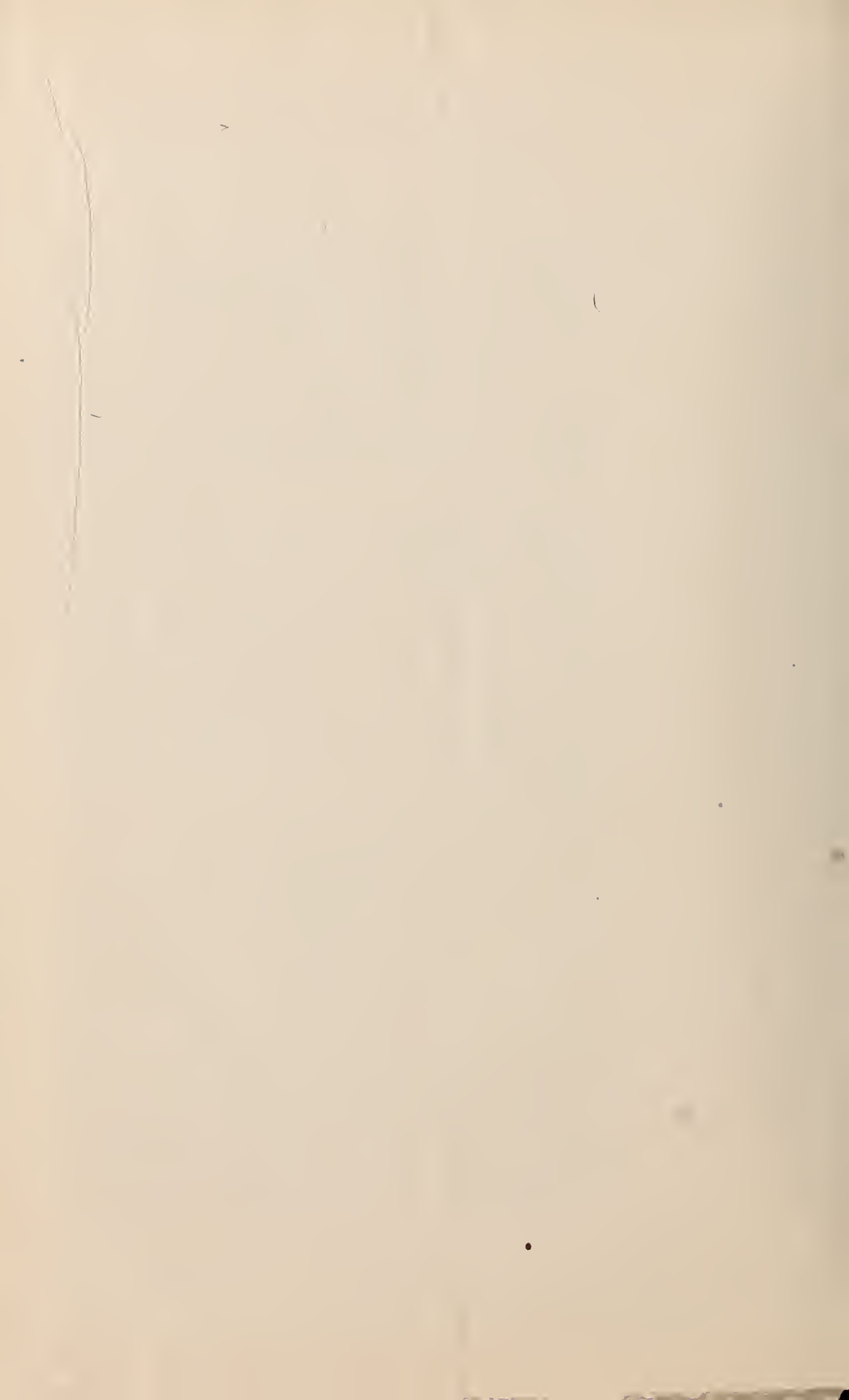
In the formation of the system of classification and arrangements of the various objects, the governing idea has been to place them in the order of development from the natural state, placing first:

1. The natural products of the soil or mine useful to man, or a basis of manufactures.
2. The manufactures and results of the combinations of these products.
3. The means and appliances by which such results have been accomplished.
4. The effects of such productive activity.

This is a general expression of the classification. There are ten comprehensive divisions, called departments, and each department is divided into ten groups, and when desirable each group may include ten classes.

The ten departments of the classification which will determine the section in which articles will be located in the Exhibition, except in such collective exhibitions as may receive special sanction, and also the arrangement of names in the catalogue are as follows:

- I. Raw materials, Mineral, Vegetable, and Animal.
- II. Materials and Manufactures used for Food, or in the Arts, the result of extractive or combining processes.
- III. Textile and Felted Fabrics ; Apparel, Costumes, and Ornaments for the person.
- IV. Furniture and Manufactures of general use in construction and in dwellings.
- V. Tools, Implements, Machines and processes.
- VI. Motors and Transportation.



VII. Apparatus and Methods for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.

VIII. Engineering, Public Works, Architecture, etc.

IX. Plastic and Graphic Arts.

X. Objects illustrating efforts for the improvement of the Physical, Intellectual, and Moral condition of Man.

The proposed exhibition is projected upon a plan securing the strictest economy compatible with its character as a national celebration, and with its international proportions.

The Women's Centennial Executive Committee, a voluntary association under the Presidency of Mrs. E. D. Gillespie, of Philadelphia, who is a grand-daughter of Benjamin Franklin, has done and is doing a good work in promoting the success of subscriptions, and the general interest in the celebration, and is now represented in twenty-four States and Territories. In the State of Pennsylvania alone, they have raised upwards of fifty thousand dollars in subscriptions to the stock of the Centennial Board of Finance, and some thousands of dollars from the profits on brilliant public festivals, which have been of such a nature as to recall the incidents and sentiments which had so large a share in shaping the destinies of the republic.

The following States have passed resolutions calling upon their Senators and Representatives in Congress to lend their support to measures promotive of the success of the Exhibition:

North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, New Jersey and New Hampshire.

And the subject is under consideration in other States and Territories.

On the Fourth of July, 1873, the transfer of the grounds at Fairmount park to the occupancy of the commission, and their dedication to the national celebration and International Exhibition, were effected in accordance with the requirements of the act of Congress.

The details of information upon the subject of buildings for the principal departments of the Exhibition, will be found in the report of the Director General, (Appendix A.) which is accompanied with plans and elevations.

It is a gratifying fact that the enterprise has been quite fully explained in the leading journals of most of the Capitals of Europe.



During the last two years the Commissioners nominated by the Governors and appointed by the President, have been faithfully endeavoring to carry out the act of Congress of March 3, 1871, providing for celebrating the Centennial of American Independence by holding an "International Exhibition in 1876—an Exhibition of American and Foreign Arts, Products and Manufactures, under the Auspices of the Government of the United States." The legislation of Congress has been the chart of the Commission as to the scale of preparation to be made. A national and international exhibition on that scale demands enormous buildings, and involves heavy expenditure. A second act of Congress, already referred to, provided a plan for raising that money. The Commission regrets to say that, outside of Pennsylvania, that plan has not proved successful. Preparations had been made for renewing a thorough and general appeal throughout the country, when the financial storm of last autumn put an instant check upon our operations. The time has now arrived when it is imperatively necessary to proceed with the erection of the buildings, but it is an indispensable prerequisite to know whether the money which Congress thought would be raised by the act of June 1, 1872, will be furnished in part by Congress. There is time enough for the work, but not a month to spare. The Commission, therefore, respectfully and earnestly urges submitting this report to Congress as speedily as practicable, with such recommendations as to the President the exigencies of the case may seem to require.

Respectfully submitted,

J. R. HAWLEY,

*President of the United States Centennial Commission.*



the Committee on Plans and Architecture, and approved on behalf of the Commission by the Executive Committee. Explanatory notes accompany the plans.

The authors of this plan are Messrs. Calvert Vaux, architect, and George Kent Radford, engineer, of the City of New York.

The Memorial Hall or permanent Centennial Exposition Building, which is to be used as the repository of specimens of Fine Arts and other precious articles, is to be erected at the expense of the State of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia.

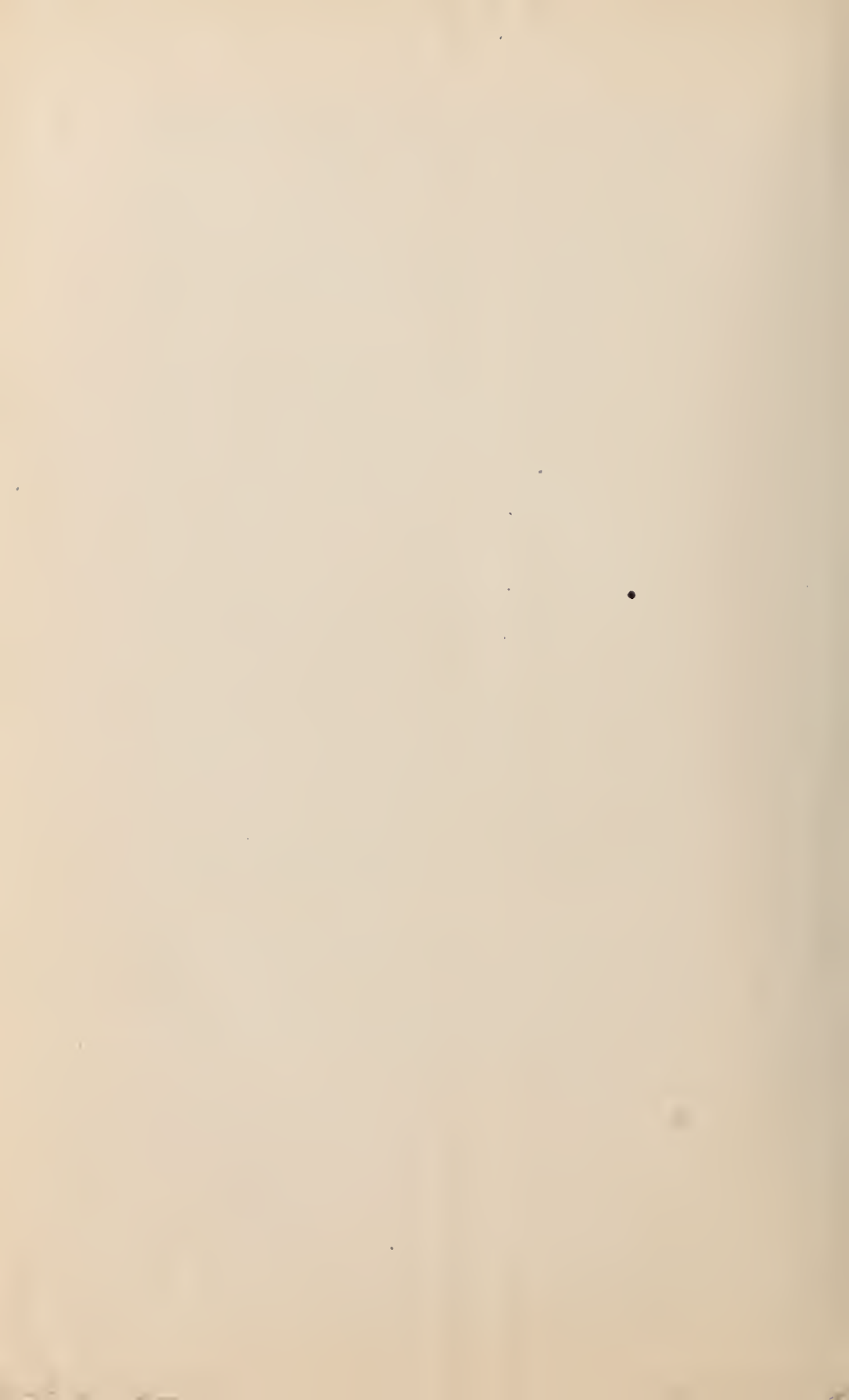
The plans, copies of which are annexed, (Enclosures 2, 3, 4, &c.,) were designed by Messrs. Collins and Autenrieth, architects, of Philadelphia. The building will be of the most substantial character, and will remain the property of the people of Pennsylvania as a memorial structure to be used for the preservation and exhibition of National and State relics and works of art, industry, mechanism and products of the soil and mines, etc., without discrimination as to the several States of the United States and Foreign Governments.

In addition to these there will be other buildings required, such as the Machinery Hall, Agricultural and Horticultural buildings, and numerous other subsidiary and necessary structures. These buildings, as at present contemplated, will cover an area of more than fifty acres.

Believing that it would be a most interesting and appropriate feature of the Exhibition, in view of its memorial character, I proposed to the President, through the Secretary of State, a Collective Exhibition on the part of the Executive Departments of the General Government of such a comprehensive character that visitors at the Exhibition would be able to form correct ideas of their functions, and examine and compare with other specimens such objects and articles as are manufactured or produced under government supervision for government use.

The President, on the twenty-third of January, 1874, issued an executive order, providing for carrying into effect these suggestions for a Collective Exhibition for the Executive Departments, including, also, the Department of Agriculture and the Smithsonian Institution.

A copy of the papers relating to this subject, including the executive order, is annexed.



The information received at the office of the commission, both from the United States and Foreign countries, indicates a growing solicitude on the part of manufacturers and producers to contribute to the exhibition ; and in this respect its success is already assured beyond any doubt.

To secure the complete and satisfactory success of the Exhibition in every department, it is absolutely necessary that such appropriations be promptly made by the National Government as will enable this Commission to work with those advantages of government support that have been enjoyed by the managers of recent international exhibitions in Europe.

Is it not the more incumbent on the Government of the United States to extend such aid in this case, because the Exhibition is, according to the law authorizing it, a national celebration of the origin of the nation? But even without such an incentive, the Government of this Republic would be untrue to the very principles on which it is founded, were it now to recede from its announced intention of adding another to the series of those great international concourses which are held in the interests of industry and peace, and which do more for the elevation of labor and the recognition of its true dignity than any other institution of the age.

Some of the leading industrial nations of Europe, and several of the American republics in response to the official communications addressed to them by the Executive of the United States, in obedience to the special requirement of the act of Congress, have, as you are aware, given notice of their decision to take part in the international exhibition.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

A. T. GOSHORN,

*Director General.*







REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL.

PHILADELPHIA, *February 12, 1874.*

*To the Honorable J. R. Hawley, President of the United States Centennial Commission.*

SIR: On entering upon the duties assigned to me as Director General, I found that the relations of the Commission with those which might be appointed by foreign governments required my first care; and early in November last, I represented to the Honorable the Secretary of State the necessity of urging upon the attention of foreign governments the importance of obtaining early information of the decisions of such governments as to their participation in the Exhibition of 1876, and of the timely appointment of Commissions by those which decided to participate. I had first, however, addressed a circular letter to the ministers of the United States in Europe and another to those in South and Central America, and Mexico. Copies are annexed (Enclosure 1.) This step was taken in consequence of the absolute necessity of learning, at the earliest possible moment, the decisions of foreign nations, and the amount of space each would be likely to require, so that ample and proper provision should be made for each nation accordingly.

Without this information it is very difficult to establish the size and character of the buildings, and to avoid the defects which have marred many features of the finest international exhibitions.

It was found necessary, with as little delay as possible, to inaugurate a uniform system of conducting the preparation of the exhibition for the several States and Territories, under such conditions as would call forth a just and ample representation of the arts, industries and resources of each. Suggestions to secure this end have been made to the Governors of the several States and Territories.

I have the honor to submit, for the information of the President and Congress, the preliminary sketches of the ground plans, elevations and perspective views of the principal Industrial Building of the Exhibition, selected by

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